

“I can thread tiny needles

without glasses or a magnifying glass”.

Beverly Sweitzer,
Clemson Eye, Easley Clinic patient



Cataract Patients Benefit from Advances in Laser Surgery

Will you develop a cataract in your lifetime? Unfortunately, chances are you will.

Cataracts are a clouding of your eye's natural lens. They slowly develop over time as proteins in the lens start to clump together, blocking light and causing blurry, dull vision.

More than 24 million Americans have a cataract. They typically start to develop by age 60, and affect the vision of more than 70% of Americans over age 80. But they can start earlier, as one in six people age 40 and above have a cataract.

If left untreated, cataracts cause progressively impaired vision and eventual blindness. In fact, they are the leading cause of blindness worldwide. When surveyed, Americans who did not have their cataracts treated said “they feared eye surgery”.

June is Cataract Awareness Month
Given it is Cataract Awareness Month,

doctors at Clemson Eye want Upstate residents to know cataract surgery is one of the safest and most commonly performed out-patient procedures in the United States. With recent innovations in technology, laser cataract surgery has made cataract surgery more safe and precise than ever before, with less eye stress and better visual outcomes for patients.

Innovation Brings Major Advances in Cataract Surgery

If a cataract is impairing your vision, then surgery is really the only treatment. The surgery involves removing the cloudy lens of the eye, and replacing it with an artificial lens called an intraocular lens implant (IOL).

“Until a few short years ago, eye surgeons manually used a blade to open the eye and capsule supporting the lens. This increased the chance of variable outcomes,” says Dr. Joe Parisi, chief ophthalmologist and medical director

at Clemson Eye. “Today, the procedure can be done with much more predictable outcomes when a laser is used.”

Local Leaders in Laser Cataract Surgery

Doctors at Clemson Eye were the first to perform laser cataract surgery in the Upstate. They have the most experience and expertise in the procedure in this region.

“Laser cataract surgery benefits patients because it results in much more precise incisions, less stress on the eye and less damage to the eye's delicate tissues,” says Dr. Parisi.

Modern laser cataract surgery involves a tiny 2.2 mm stitch-less laser incision and the replacement of the diseased, cloudy lens with a clear lens implant. With recent LenSX® laser FDA approval, Clemson Eye surgeons create incisions that are up to 10 times more precise than manual incisions. See Images I and II.

During the 15-minute surgery, patients are comfortably awake and experience clear vision during a quick recovery.

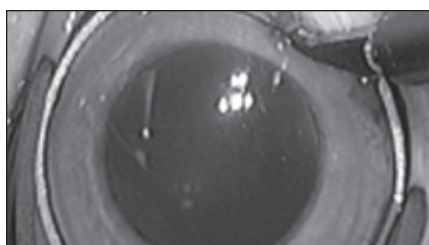


Image I: Bladed incision.

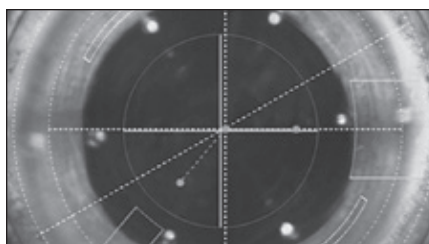


Image II: Laser incision.

Astigmatism Correction During Same Procedure

Perfect vision is the goal in most cataract surgeries. However, it is reached in only 55% of traditional blade cataract surgeries. This is usually due to the uncorrected astigmatism left behind and possible measurement prediction errors.

“Astigmatism is a defect in the cornea or lens that leads to blurry vision, trouble reading, squinting, eye strain, headaches and tired eyes. It is common

and often present from birth,” explains Dr. Brian Johnson of Clemson Eye.

“A normal cornea is rounded like a soccer ball, and refracts light evenly. A cornea with astigmatism is shaped more like a football, which means when light enters the eye it is not refracted evenly and only part of the object you're viewing is in focus.”

“With the recent introduction of laser technology to cataract surgery, we can now correct a patient's astigmatism during the same laser cataract procedure,” says Dr. Johnson. “It is quite revolutionary.”

Modern Lens Implants

In addition to having their astigmatism corrected, cataract patients can opt for a modern lens implant to correct their nearsightedness or farsightedness, or both. As a result, cataract patients in their 50s through to their 90s can be free of glasses – or much less dependent on them – after their laser cataract surgery.

Beverly Sweitzer, is one such patient. She lives in Easley, SC, and is an avid quilter.

“I recently had laser cataract surgery with a ReSTOR® lens implant done by Dr. Johnson at Clemson Eye. It was easy and painless. And I was very happy because the next morning I could thread these tiny needles I use to sew quilt patches together. I didn't need glasses or the magnifying glass I used to have to use. I'm just delighted that since my surgery, I no longer have to wear glasses,” says Mrs. Sweitzer.

“The results are consistently better for our patients when advanced intraocular lenses are implanted using the laser procedure. More of these patients have close to 20/20 vision after their laser cataract surgery,” says Dr. Don Glaser, also of Clemson Eye.

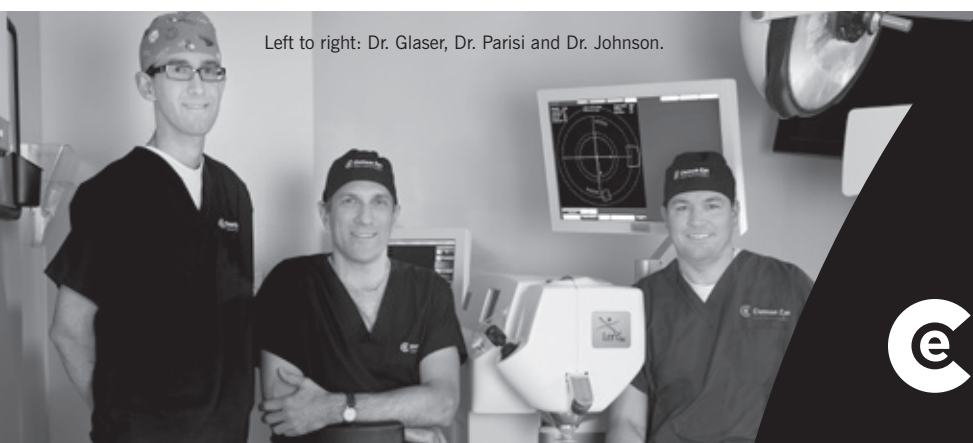
“The Toric® lens corrects for both distance and astigmatism, and multifocal lenses, such as ReSTOR®, allow you to see from close up to far away. With these types of advanced lens implants, you can read, cook, bathe, work, drive, shop and play independent of glasses in most instances,” adds Dr. Glaser.

Eye Exam is Critical

If you think you may have a cataract, the doctors at Clemson Eye encourage you to book an eye exam with an eye doctor immediately. In terms of costs and payment, Clemson Eye accepts most insurance plans, Medicare and Medicaid. Basic cataract surgery is covered by most plans, and if you're a Clemson Eye patient, you have the option of 24-month, 0% financing.

Drs. Parisi, Johnson, and Glaser are American Board and LenSX® Certified Ophthalmologists. They have performed over 30,000 cataract and refractive surgeries.

Left to right: Dr. Glaser, Dr. Parisi and Dr. Johnson.



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